

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE Patent and Trademark Office

ASSISTANT SECRETARY AND COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS Washington, D.C. 20231



December 23, 1999

Mr. Charles L. Gholz Oblon, Spivak, McClelland, Maier & Neustadt, P.C. Fourth Floor 1755 Jefferson Davis Highway Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Mr. Charles L. Gholz:

This letter is in response to your most recent status inquiry concerning Application Serial Number 08/420,503.

As requested by Applicant, the possibility of an interference with Patent Number 5,435,308 is being investigated. An issue has arisen regarding the payment of the maintenance fees in the patent. This issue must be resolved before the interference can be formerly declared.

I have been informed by the examiner that he has been in close contact with Mr. Rick Neifeld of Oblon, Spivak, McClelland Maier and Neustadt and that Mr. Neifeld is aware of the circumstances of this application. As soon as the issue concerning payment of the maintenance fees for the patent is resolved, the examiner will take up the case for the appropriate action.

For your records it is noted that this application is assigned to Art Unit 3736. Group Art Unit 3311 was abolished when the Patent Corps reorganized into Technology Centers in 1998.

Charles L. Gholz Serial No. 08/420,503 December 23, 1999

I apologize for the failure of the Office to respond in writing to your previous status inquiries. If you have any questions concerning this letter or the progress of the application you can call the underdsigned at the number provided below.

Sincerely,

John J. Love, Director Technology Center 3700 Groups 3730/3760

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